



(11) Publication number : **0 512 788 A1**

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(21) Application number : **92304026.5**

(51) Int. Cl.⁵ : **A63F 3/00**

(22) Date of filing : **05.05.92**

(30) Priority : **06.05.91 ZA 913396**

(43) Date of publication of application :
11.11.92 Bulletin 92/46

(84) Designated Contracting States :
DE ES FR GB IT

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(54) **Playing surface.**

(57) A playing surface includes a representation surface (16) and a dice trough (18) adjacent to the representation surface. A rim (20) is located adjacent to the dice trough, with the dice trough being interposed between the rim and the representation surface. The rim may be in the form of a lean rest. A transparent barrier (24) is interposed between the dice trough and the representation surface.

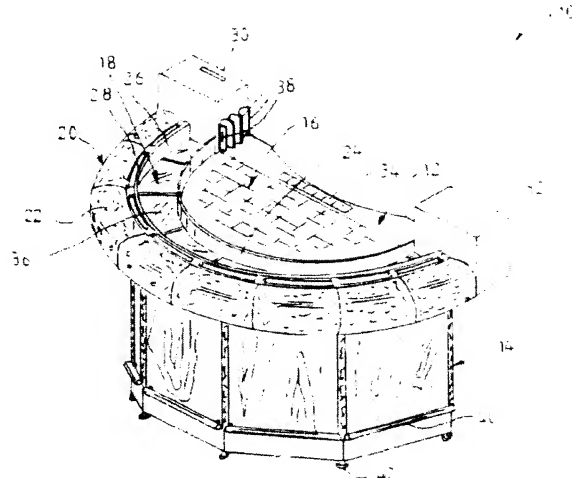


FIGURE 1

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TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates to a playing surface and more particularly, but not exclusively, to a playing table.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Dice are generally rolled across the playing surface of a playing table or to one side of the playing surface. If the dice are rolled across the playing surface interference with the playing tokens can result.

OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

It is accordingly an object of the invention to provide a playing surface in which interference with the playing tokens can be eliminated.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the invention a playing surface includes:

a representation surface; and

a dice trough adjacent to the representation surface;

in the preferred form of the invention a rim is provided adjacent to the dice trough with the dice trough being interposed between the rim and the representation surface. The rim may be a lean rest and it may include demarcated player zones.

A barrier may be interposed between the dice trough and the representation surface. In one form of the invention the barrier may be transparent and it may be made of perspex.

A mirror surface may be interposed between the dice trough and the lean rest.

The surface of the dice trough may be made of a hard material to ensure that the dice will bounce randomly or roll satisfactorily on it. Thus the surface may be made of a ceramic material, glass or stone such as granite or marble.

The representation surface preferably has a representation of a game on it. Illuminating means may be provided below the representation surface for illuminating specific zones on the representation surface. Thus at least part of the representation surface may be transparent.

The playing surface may include at least one container for storing tokens, money or other articles associated with playing the particular game indicated on the representation surface. In the preferred form of the invention two containers are provided in the form of safes.

Racks for tokens may be provided on the playing surface.

An electronic key pad for entering results obtained by the throw of the dice may be located on the

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playing surface or may be associated with the playing surface. The keypad may be connected to an electronic processor or computer which can process the results of the game.

Display means such as a screen may be connected to the computer for displaying various results. In addition, the computer may be connected to the illuminating means under the playing surface so that the illumination of specific zones on the representation surface can be controlled by the computer.

The playing surface may be supported on a stand. Preferably the playing surface is releasably attached to the stand. The stand may include a storage zone.

The term "dice" is used herein in a wide sense to indicate any article which can be thrown or rolled on a surface to provide a random result.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

figure 1 is a perspective view of the playing table; figure 2 is a front view of the table; figure 3 is a rear view of the table; figure 4 is a plan view of the table; figure 5 is a plan view of a representation of a game; and figure 6 is a perspective view of another embodiment of a playing table.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring to the drawings, a playing table 10 includes a playing surface 12 supported on a stand 14. The playing surface 12 includes a representation surface 16, a dice trough 18 and a rim 20. The rim 20 comprises a detachable, upholstered lean rest which has demarcated player zones 22. Each player zone 22 is a different colour to its adjacent player zones. A transparent, perspex barrier 24 separates the dice trough 18 from the representation surface 16. A mirror surface 26 separates the rim 20 from the dice trough 18. Racks 28 for chips line the inner circumference of the lean rest 20 so that each player zone 22 is provided with his own chip rack.

The representation surface 16 has the representation shown in figure 5 provided on it. The representation surface is at least partly transparent and lights (not shown) are located below the surface for illuminating specific zones on the representation surface. The specific zones may be of different colours or different colour combinations. A safe 30 with a top slot and a rear door is located at one of the ends of the surface and a cupboard 32 is located at the other end.

A key pad 34 is connected to a computer (not shown) which is in turn connected to a display screen (also not shown) and to a relay switch means for controlling the operation of the lights under the representation surface. The surface of the dice trough 18 is

lined with marble tiles 36. Upright chip holders 38 are provided adjacent to the safe 30. The stand 14 has foot rests 40 and legs 42 which are adjustable to ensure that the playing surface is level. Shelves 44 are provided within the stand 14 and doors (not shown) are used to control access to the shelves. The computer and its associated equipment are supported on the shelves 44.

In use, the game is controlled by a croupier who stands behind the table. The croupier enters the results obtained by a throw of the dice into the computer via the key pad 34. The computer with its own specific software programme then indicates the pay-outs to be made on the display screen. In addition, the computer controls the lights under the representation surface 16 so that the pay-out zones on the representation surface are illuminated. The croupier also enters via the key pad the amount of money (chips) which he collects in and pays out to the players into the computer. The computer can then provide a printed report and a statistical analysis of the results obtained and of the amount of money collected and paid out during play. The computer therefore provides a running total of the bank balance and a history report of the game at any one time.

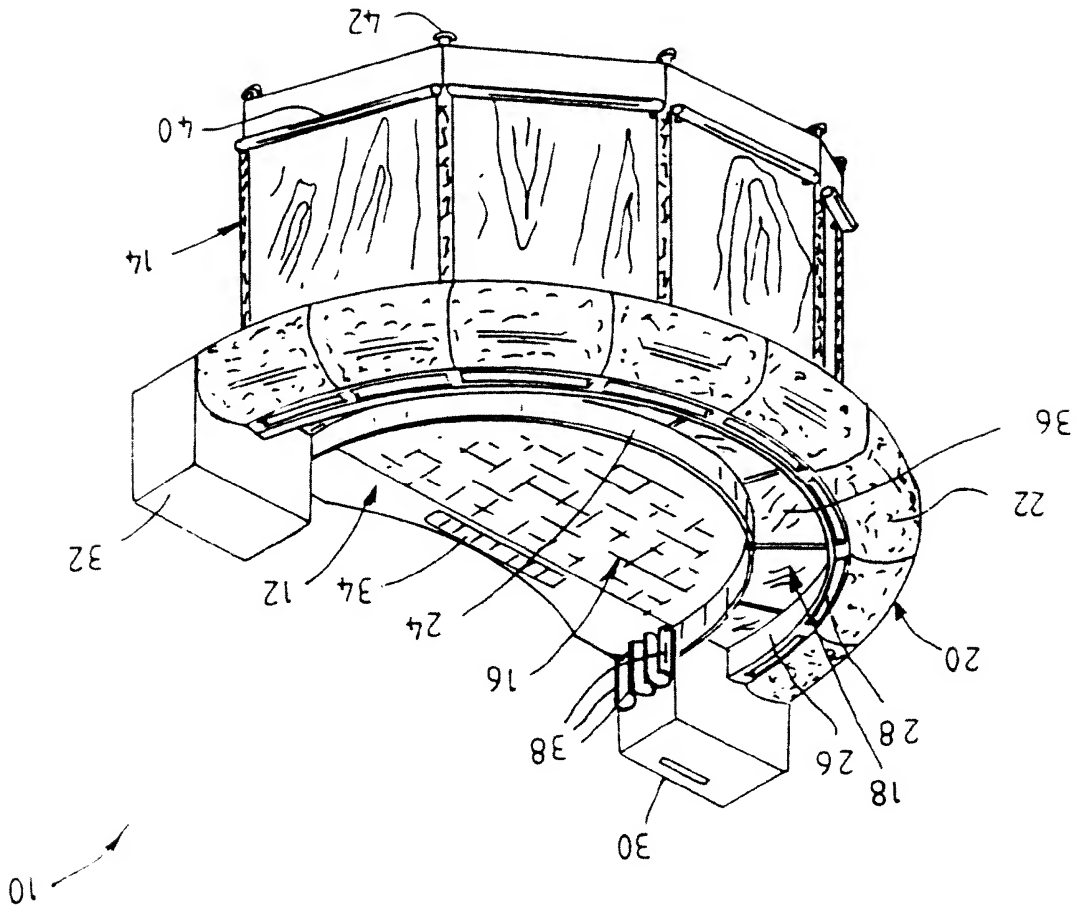
It will be appreciated that many modifications or variations of the invention are possible without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention. For example, the game need not be computerised and a less elaborate portable version 10.1 of the playing table can be used. One such version is shown in figure 6 in which rim 20.1 is not upholstered and is an integral part of the playing surface and provides chip racks for each layer zone. The legs and foot rests 14.1 are detachable for easy storage and transportation. The playing table 10.1 has a representation surface 16.1, a dice trough 18.1, transparent perspex barrier 24.1 and a mirror surface 26.1. This version 10.1 may be coin-operated.

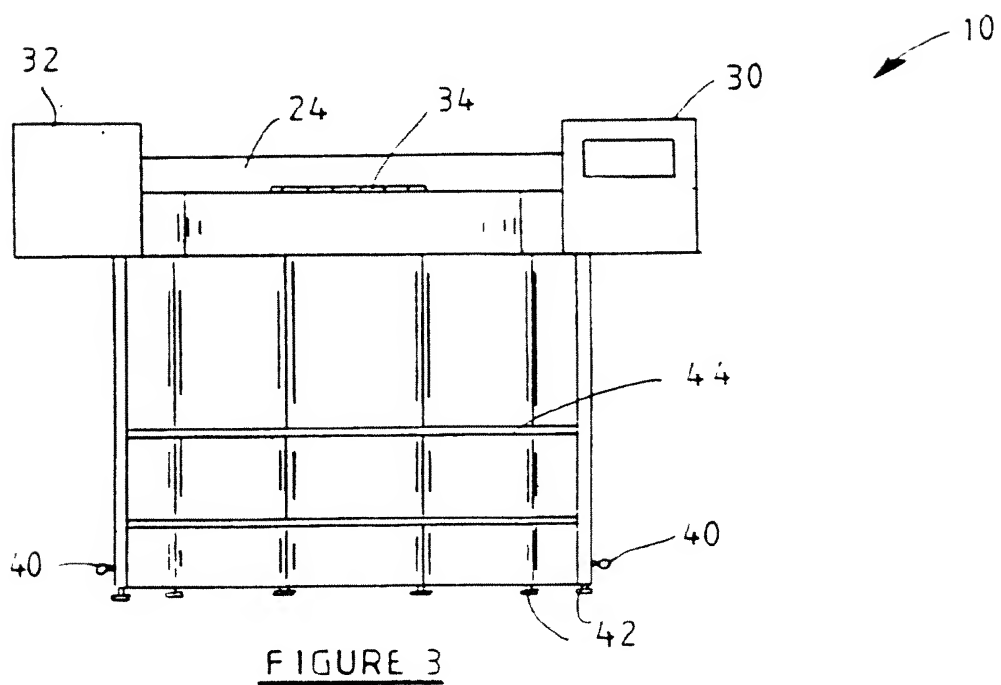
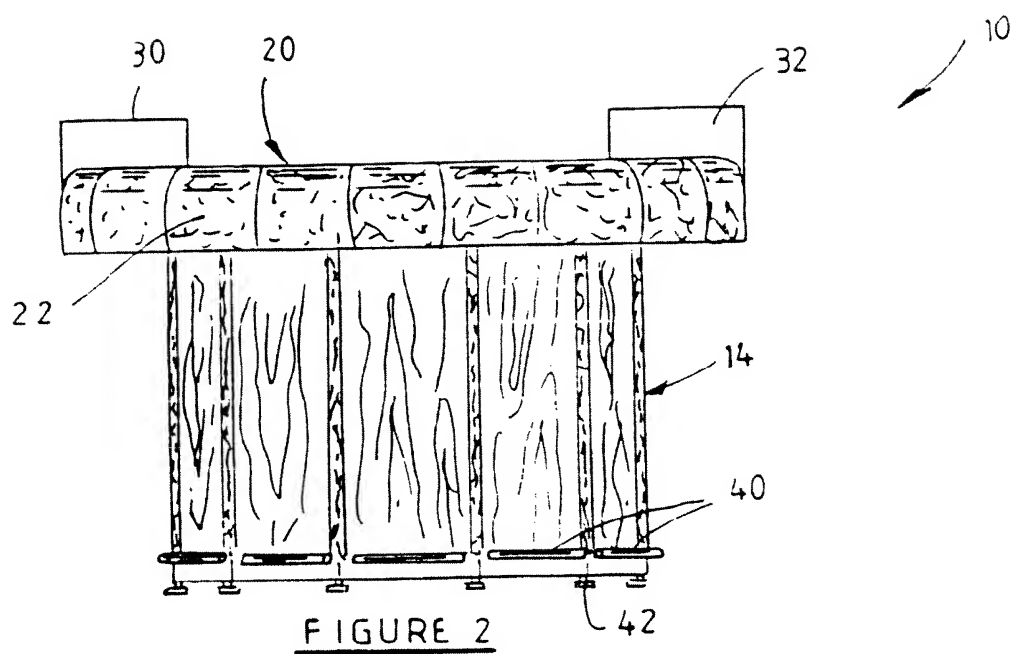
Claims

1. A playing surface including a representation surface and a dice trough adjacent to the representation surface.
2. The playing surface of claim 1 including a rim adjacent to the dice trough, with the dice trough being interposed between the rim and the representation surface.
3. The playing surface of claim 2 wherein the rim is a lean rest.
4. The playing surface of claim 2 or claim 3 wherein demarcated player zones are provided on the rim.

5. The playing surface of any of the above claims including a barrier interposed between the dice trough and the representation surface.
6. The playing surface of claim 5 wherein the barrier is transparent.
7. The playing surface of any of claims 2 to 6 including a mirror surface interposed between the rim and the dice trough.
8. The playing surface of any of the above claims wherein the surface of the dice trough is ceramic, stone or glass.
9. The playing surface of any of the above claims wherein the representation surface has a representation of a game on it.
10. The playing surface of any of the above claims wherein at least part of the representation surface is transparent so that it can be illuminated by illuminating means located below the representation surface.
11. The playing surface of any of the above claims including racks for tokens.
12. The playing surface of any of the above claims including at least one storage container.
13. The playing surface of any of the above claims including an electronic keypad which can be connected to a computer.
14. The playing surface of any of the above claims including a stand or legs for supporting the playing surface.

FIGURE 1





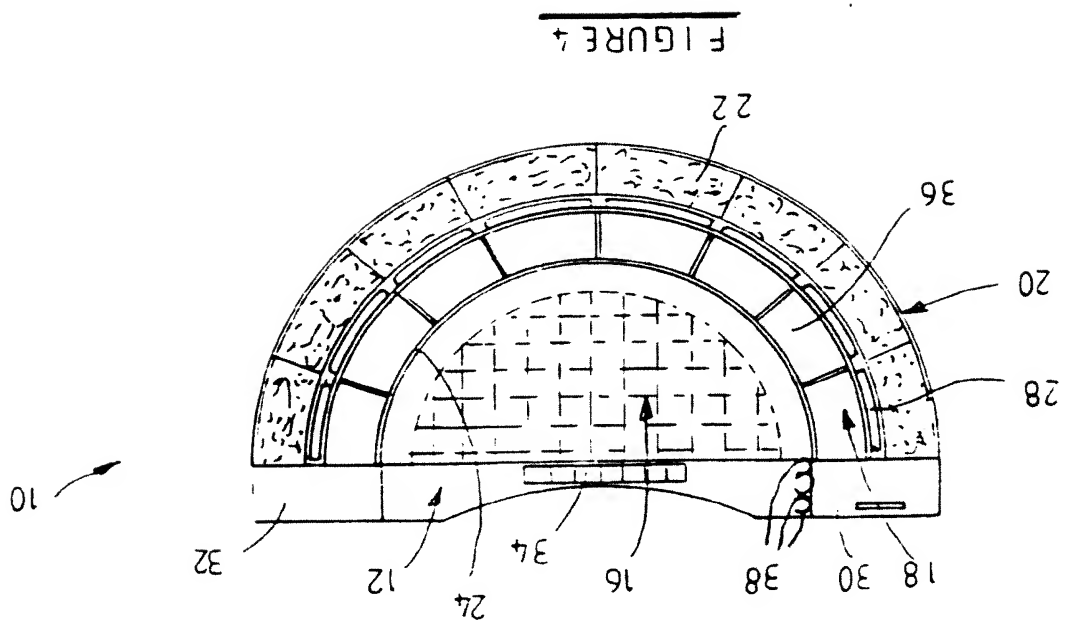
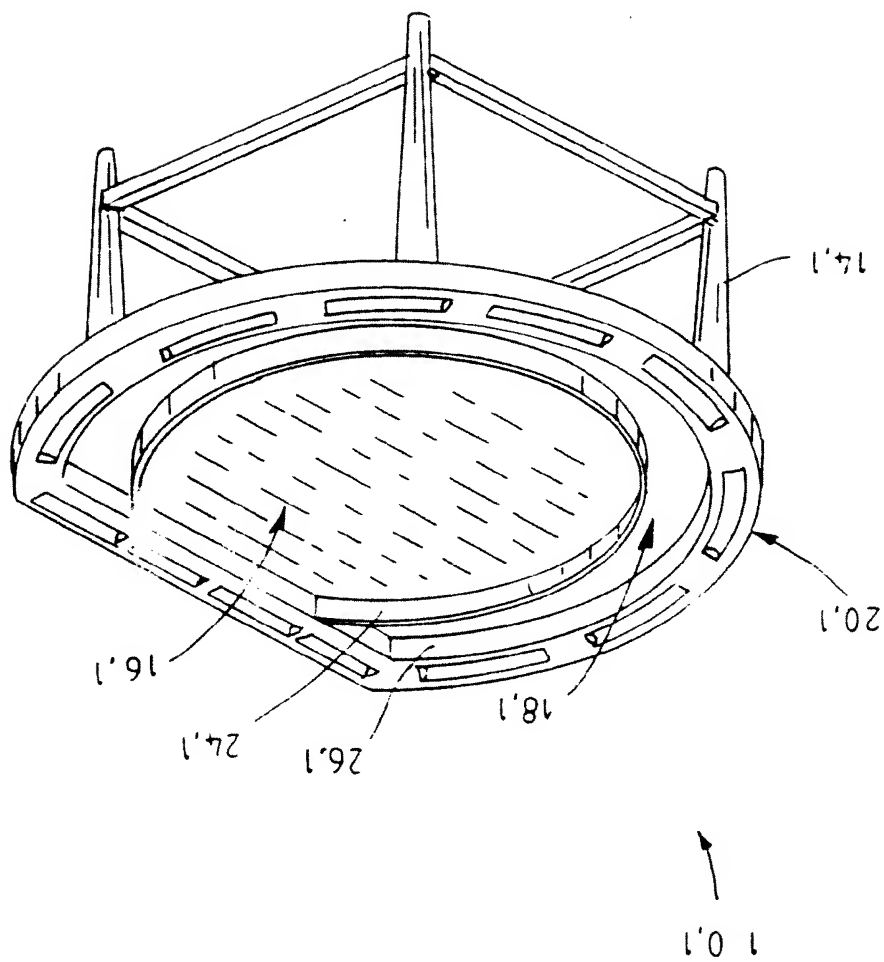




FIGURE 6





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 92 30 4026

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
Y	DE-A-3 816 338 (BROSE) * column 1, line 64 - line 66; figure 1A *	1-14	A63F3/00
Y	US-A-4 247 114 (CARROLL) * column 2, line 50 - line 62; figure 2 *	1-14	
A	US-A-4 813 675 (GREENWOOD) * column 2, line 42 - line 48; figure 6 *	3	
A	FR-A-2 377 817 (DESMONS) * page 1, line 22 - line 24 *	6	
A	FR-E-63 791 (MANUFACTURES REUNIES DE GAUFRAGET IMPRESSIONS) * page 1, column 0, line 15 - line 23 *	6	
A	US-A-4 428 580 (PASQUINE) * column 1, line 62 - line 66 *	6	
A	US-A-4 807 883 (SILVERMAN) * column 5, line 44 - line 49 *		
A	US-A-3 802 708 (LIBERT) * column 3, line 4 - line 7 * * column 3, line 26 - line 31 *	10	A63F
A	GB-A-2 173 406 (ARMSTRONG) * page 3, line 5 - line 10 *	13	
A	US-A-4 659 087 (SHEN ET AL.) * column 1, line 51 - line 54; figure 1 *	14	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 10 JULY 1992	Examiner GLAS J.
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons A : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

EPO FORM 1503 (01.82) (P0601)

